HANDLING COVID-19
Page 4

MARVEL NEXT PHASE
Page 7

The DrumBeat

Tyler Junior College's independent student media since 1927

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TJC addresses winter safety concerns

With the prospect of another freeze, students are asking what measures TJC is taking to address safety on campus

By Dillon Richardson
Multimedia Journalist

Last year's winter storm in Texas set a record-breaking low temperature of -6 degrees in Tyler, along with a massive statewide power grid failure that affected the Tyler Junior College campus in addition to the surrounding area. In 2021, all TJC locations were closed from Feb. 15 through the 20. Classes were originally supposed to be remotely conducted, but widespread outages of electricity forced classes to become mostly canceled throughout the week. On Feb. 22, face-to-face classes returned to all locations. With supply shortages this year due to COVID-19 and temperatures already dropping below freezing, students need to know what considerations have been taken at TJC this season.

Campus officials who oversee different departments such as campus police and maintenance spoke about their plans this winter.

David Liner, director of safety and emergency management, assures students that campus departments are prepared for the freeze with their continuity of operations plans, which are procedures designed to help various departments continue to operate during emergencies.

Q: Are there any plans to address another potential hard freeze and/or winter storm this year?

A: Key campus departments have completed continuity of operations plans. Additionally, TJC's strong campus response to COVID-19 issues has really aided in these planning efforts. This year we would like to remind students and staff to elevate electronic devices off of floors to minimize any water damage to equipment that might result from thawing pipes that might have ruptured during an extended freeze. These measures might also lower the risk of an electrical hazard.

Q: What were the most common mistakes students and staff made, and what can be done to see the number of those same mistakes decrease?

A: Perhaps one of the most common issues involves students or staff using unapproved heat sources such as candles to generate heat. A heat source such as an unattended candle or other sources could create a fire hazard or a carbon monoxide exposure risk. Items not made for microwave ovens or over-cooking items in microwave ovens are always a risk.

Graphic by Marie Salazar

Q: In your experience, what is the most life-threatening mistake an individual who isn't familiar with adverse winter weather could make?

A: Again, unapproved ignition sources are always a concern. Slips and falls can be a risk due to surface conditions, ice for example. Other issues include being aware of your surroundings. Falling snow, ice or other debris from rooftops can create a hazard as temperatures rise. Beware of potentially falling tree limbs during this time. If you suspect a natural gas leakage, contact TJC Police immediately.

Michael Seale, chief of police, explains how power outages may affect campus life.

Q: How much participation can TJC Campus Police expect to receive from other local first responder agencies during events such as these?

A: The TJC Police Department primarily handles calls for service during weather-related incidents. Assistance from other agencies will be on a case-by-case basis and based on the availability of the agency.

Q: In the event of a power outage, where can a student go to seek shelter and warmth?

A: On-campus locations would be limited to the buildings not affected by the power outage and if those buildings could accommodate the students. In addition, the conditions on campus would play a role in students' movement on or off-campus. Students' movement would be coordinated between many departments to ensure any movement of students could be done safely.

Winter safety continued on Page 3

College partners with Timely Care app to provide free health services

By Asia Johnson
Managing Editor

For years now, Tyler Junior College has faced the issue of having one counselor serving the entire campus. A solution to alleviate this problem has been presented to students that can be carried in the palm of one's hand.

The Timely Care app has partnered with TJC to provide services for students free of charge.

These services include both the MedicalNow and TalkNow modules that provide on-demand aid as well as scheduled counseling sessions, health coaching and medical assistance, all by licensed professionals.

Client Success Leader at Timely MD, Griffin Sharp said, "All the services are coming at no cost to students. No credit card required. No insurance required. Students can simply register a free account and connect with a medical or mental health professional right away."

Although every module is supplied freely, there are some limitations.

"Students have six scheduled counseling visits per year through the Timely Care platform. The medical, TalkNow and health coaching services are all unlimited," Sharp said. "There's also psychiatry services that are available. To get access to psychiatry, students will go to in-person counseling and the in-person counselor will provide the student with a referral code so they can get access to that resource."

Psychiatrists treat more complex mental health disorders and prescribe medication whereas psychologists and counselors treat less severe conditions that don't require prescriptions.

With the need for mental health aid for students, administration acknowledged this issue and devised a plan, which was initiated by two determining factors according to the dean of students, Dr. Tampa Nannen.

The first component was recognizing the need for additional resources. After finding a suitable corporation to partner with, it was shown that the services provided were very costly. Executive administrators began to find ways to cover these services without affecting student fees.

"In 2021, TJC received grant monies through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund that were designed to make it possible for institutions to implement projects like telehealth services," Nannen said. TJC's executive

Timely Care continued on Page 3

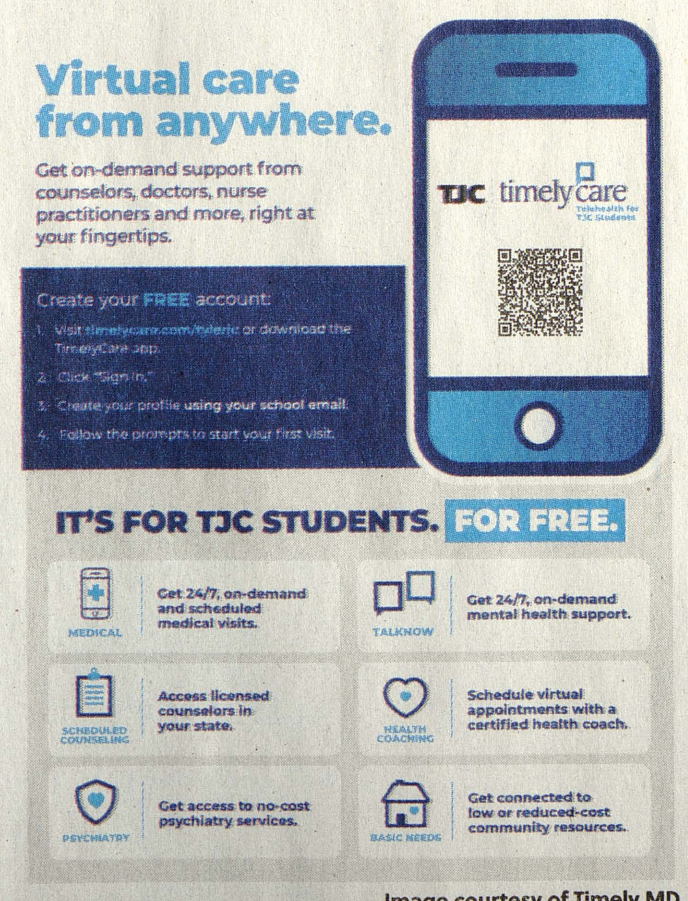


Image courtesy of Timely MD

This flyer explains the capabilities of Timely Care app to TJC students.

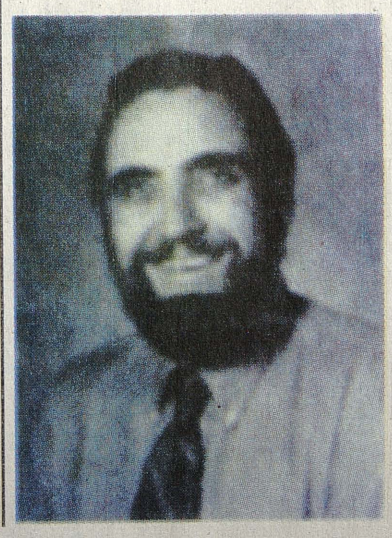
Faculty, staff reminisce on Clarence Strickland

By Colton Hollis
Multimedia Journalist

Recently, the Tyler Junior College community mourned the loss of Professor Clarence Leon Strickland. "Strick," as he came to be known by his colleagues and students alike, left a lasting impression on all those he interacted with. Strickland was hired as technical theatre director at TJC in 1962, retiring in 2009.

This impression seemed to happen instantly, as well. Speech Professor M'Liss Hindman spoke at Strickland's memorial service. "When I first came to TJC, before I was hired, I had an appointment with Dr. Brown. She was the head of the department and I didn't know where her office was. I walked into the building and here was this man standing there in a paint-splattered jumpsuit, with a shock of black hair and a big black beard. He looked pretty rugged and said 'Can I help you?' I asked for directions, and he pointed me the right way. I assumed he was just a janitor or other worker from how he was dressed. I didn't realize he was another teacher until I got hired and attended our faculty meeting and saw him sitting there. Boy, did I misjudge him," Hindman recalled.

While Strickland left the school 12 years ago, the impact he had on his fellow faculty members and former students remain in their hearts. To them, it was easy to reminisce when they heard the name Clarence Strickland.



Clarence Strickland worked at the TJC theatre department for 47 years, leaving a lasting legacy among staff and faculty.

Image courtesy of Vaughn Library Online archives

Strickland continued on Page 3

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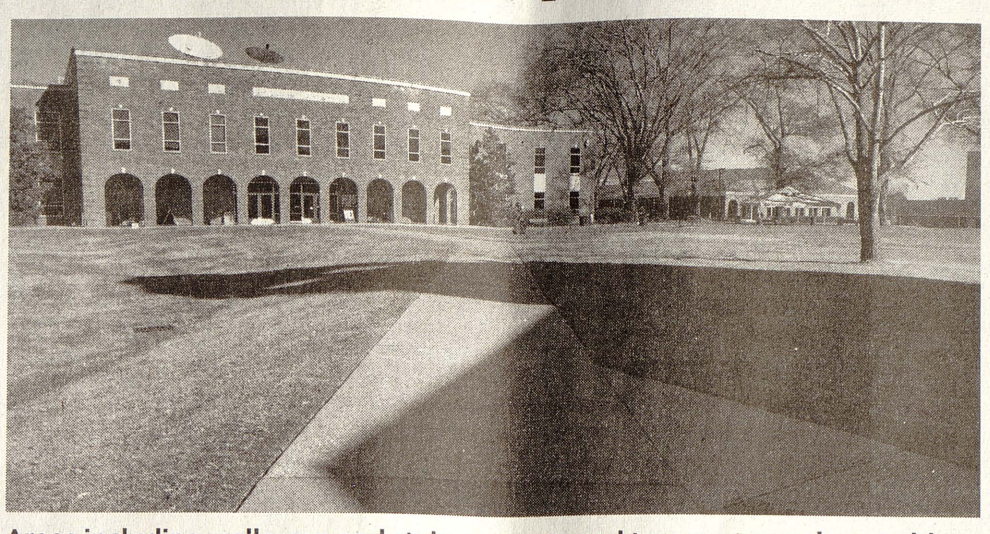
Winter safety: Preparation continues

From Page 1

Mark Gartman, director of facilities and construction maintenance, shares information regarding infrastructure during winter weather.

Q: What steps are maintenance officials taking to prepare for another winter storm?

A: Staff is prepared to mobilize if inclement weather arrives. All equipment on the underground hydronic loop is on our BAS (building automation system). This system will react to freezing temperatures and protect our equipment and buildings. As long as there is electricity (which is beyond our control) this system will function. Facilities and Construction have removed upward of 60 trees that were damaged beyond saving from last year's storm. In addition, dead limbs have been removed from the remaining trees. These actions will help mitigate the impact of falling limbs and trees. Of course, high winds, large ice, and snow accumulations still pose a threat to tree limbs and other overhead objects. This will be addressed through notifications sent out accordingly.



Areas including walkways and stairways exposed to severe weather could potentially become hazardous. Individuals are advised to use caution when encountering these areas during a severe weather event.

Q: Taking into consideration last year's snowstorm, are there any concerns maintenance has this season going into February?

A: The electricity and water staying on.

Dana Ballard, director of campus services, discusses power outage preparations.

Q: Are there any extra precautions that will be taken in order to address a possible power outage.

A: The main cafeteria in RSC has a back-up generator in the event of a possible power outage.

As the weather gets colder, it is even more important to stay informed.

Prepare for power outages by having at least one flashlight available, stocking up on extra batteries for items that may need them, an adequate supply of non-perishable items, and extra cases of water. To reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning or smoke inhalation, make sure to keep areas well-ventilated and put extra batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to make sure they work properly. Check your prescribed medications and talk to your doctor if you're running low to get your next batch early, if possible. Ensuring you have extra blankets and other well-insulated articles of clothing and bedding items available can go a long way in providing comfort while also keeping your core body temperature stabilized.

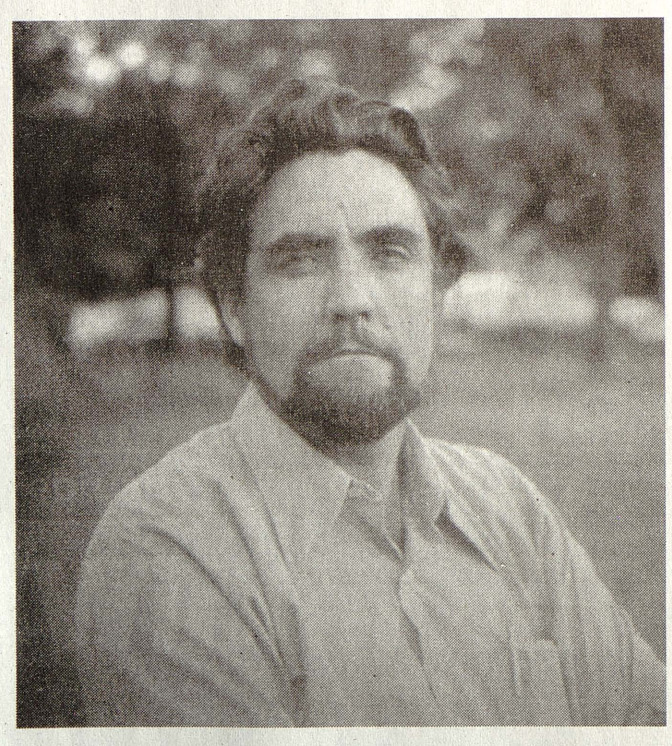
Although winter storms can be frightening, by taking the necessary steps to stay informed on your local weather and preparing in advance in the event of adverse weather, you are already doing what it takes to not become another statistic.

Strickland: Discussing impact on TJC

From Page 1

M'Liss Hindman-Speech Professor: "I think of his big generous laugh first when remembering him. We had offices down the hall from each other. Gosh, both when we were over in Potter and when we moved over to WCA. Hearing his big laugh coming out of his office was always special, warming my heart. It meant he was having fun with students."

Lara Smith-Speech and Theatre Department Chair: "He was creative and kind; those would be my two biggest descriptors of Strick. When I first met Strick, which was right at 30 years ago when I became an adjunct professor here, he was welcoming, always kind to me. He was always willing to offer any assistance or help. Anytime he talked to you, you knew you were the only thing he was thinking about. He was never distracted from the conversation he was having with you. You really felt like he was seeing you and listening to you, that he wanted to help you in any way he could. When I became a full-time professor, I was able to work with him as a full-time colleague, and it was more of the same. He would welcome me every morning with a 'Good morning pretty lady!' He really made me feel like it was a personal connection, not just a statement."



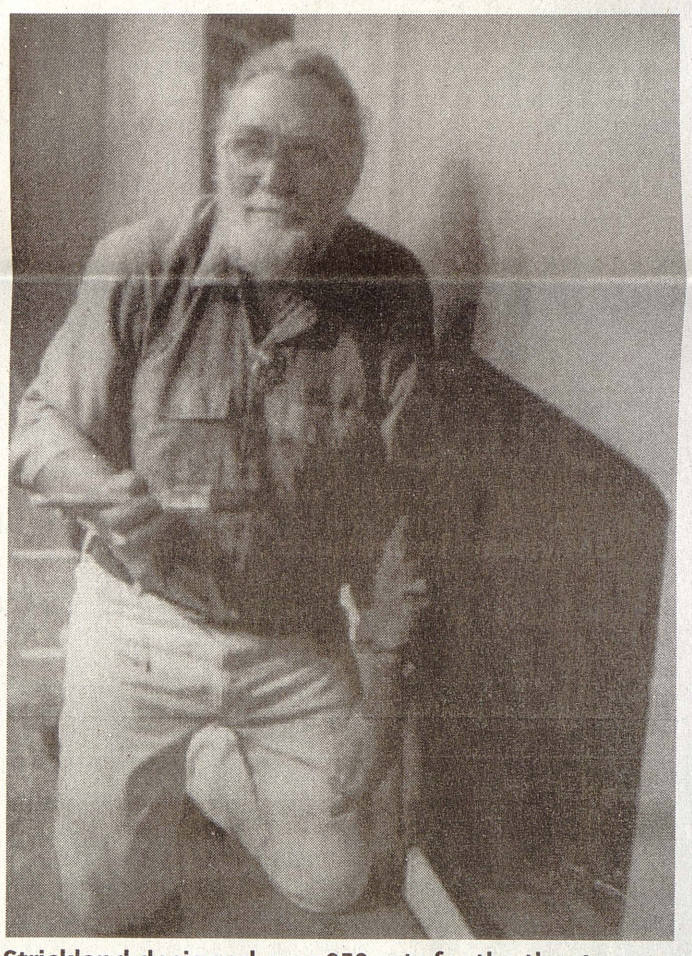
Strickland received his master's in speech and theatre from East Texas State University.

Photo courtesy of Clarence L. Strickland Memorial Youtube Page

Bryce McWilliams-Director of Theatre Facilities: "Artist, in the truest sense. He wasn't just an artist, he was a creator. He was always driven to be working, creating. He never stopped using his imagination and it was always impressive to watch his process. It was always changing, and he was always exploring new things. He just never stopped creating." While McWilliams doesn't remember the first show he worked on with Strick, he does remember his first interaction. "I walked into the shop and he said, 'Can you use a saw?' I responded, 'Yes, I can,' and he put me to work. My father was a carpenter and there was my experience. There wasn't much of a discussion on whether or not I was going to work with him; he just put me to work and expected me to come back the next day. I owe a lot of my career to him. I ended up going into technical theater and going down that path because I worked for him."

Jacob Davis-Theatre Professor: "It's tough for me, he was my mentor. He was the first person to welcome me on the campus. Whenever I was 18, I came from the panhandle of Texas, didn't know anyone from Tyler and he welcomed me with open arms. That's always where my mind goes is that first relationship. For me, he was the first person that I realized that everyone truly sees the world differently, and he was constantly communicating the way he saw the world in a multitude of ways. It really opened my eyes to how humans work so I think about that experience a lot. One of my first days on campus, it was before I moved into the dorm and it was before classes started, I went to eat lunch in the cafeteria and ran into another theatre student who told me Strick was going to be working on designing the first show's set in the scene shop. So I didn't have anything to do and didn't know anybody. I walked back there and there was no one else there but him, and he grabbed a chair and pulled it next to him while he built a model for the set. He didn't ask for my name or anything, he instantly just started talking to me about what was going on. Didn't care about my major or anything, it was just interesting to go along and see what his process was."

Andrea Porter-Speech Professor: "The first thing I think of would be incredible. He was very unique, very creative. He was an artist; he was a friend; he was a mentor; he was a teacher; he was a creator. His creativity just blew me away, these sets that he designed, his way to reach out and connect with students and make you feel a part was just incredible. He was very friendly and kind and always there for people. First thing I worked with Strickland on was the set for 'The Crucible' that we did here at TJC. I had an 8 a.m. scene shop class that semester, bright and early we would break out the table saws and get busy."



Strickland designed over 250 sets for the theatre program and other TJC groups.

Photo courtesy of Clarence L. Strickland Memorial Youtube Page

David "Doc" Crawford-Theatre Professor: "He was a red-hot, jagged old iron rock thrown into a still pond. He was the agitator and the ripples that he caused over the entire pond are those that he touched in life. He touched students, who proceeded to touch their students, and they touched their students. There is no telling how many thousands of people he has affected through his art form. Just teaching his method of theatre. You hear of students all the way back to the 60s who are still talking about Strick and the way he did things and what he meant to them. His legacy will be forever because the oldest of those, which I am one of, and how many thousands of children who are now teaching others and those who are now in the business. Who knows? It's amazing that you will hear people talk about him around the world, those who came in contact with him."

Timely Care: Services available anywhere, anytime

From Page 1

administration reviewed and accepted the proposal from TimelyMD to provide an extensive array of telehealth services, beyond the scope of the mental health services that were initially sought."

Some students say that this app may help meet their personal needs.

Computer Science major Londairion Calloway said, "Balancing between work and school has left me with less time for the gym. I'm definitely going to be using the health coaching service to help with my fitness."

Timely Care services are accessible for students anytime they need it.

"It's available 24/7, 365 days, holidays, weekends and during breaks for all students," Sharp said. "It's available both in state and out of state as well. So, if a student is traveling out of state for an athletic event or traveling home for any reason, students can use it in whatever state they're in across the country."

Timely Care can be downloaded on all devices through the app store or can be acquired online at timelycare.com/tjc.

timely care

Graphic courtesy of Timely MD

Handling COVID-19 in spring 2022

By Marie Salazar
Editor-in-Chief

Confirmed COVID-19 cases have increased in Smith County by 11,244 from Jan. 1 to Jan. 31, bringing the case number total to 49,849 according to nethealthcovid19.org. Tyler Junior College requires students to follow COVID-19 policies to combat the virus this spring.

"We do not want any illnesses on campus and that doesn't have to be COVID. I mean, a simple cold, flu; we don't want to run anyone's immunity down," said Kim Lessner, vice president for operations/chief operations officer at TJC.

Lessner explains how many of these policies are in place for the safety of employees and students.

"Our No. 1 and only reason for being in existence is the education. Yes, our mission and our vision is educating everyone. It's a path to a better world," Lessner said. "That's why we have policies still in place for COVID that in some cases mimic what the CDC recommends. But we also in some cases are more strict than what the CDC recommends."

With medicine and vaccinations becoming more readily available, TJC has relaxed its rules in ways like eliminating the previous mandatory 6-foot distancing rule in classrooms and events. Though TJC no longer requires this mandatory social distancing they still require a 75% capacity at any non-educational event.

"So we're willing to be open for educational purposes, but if it's recreational then we're going to take a little bit less risk, and so there is a 75% capacity," Lessner said.

TJC's updated COVID-19 policy includes options to end a quarantine early if in good health, and TJC offers vaccination opportunities every Wednesday.

Staying Home

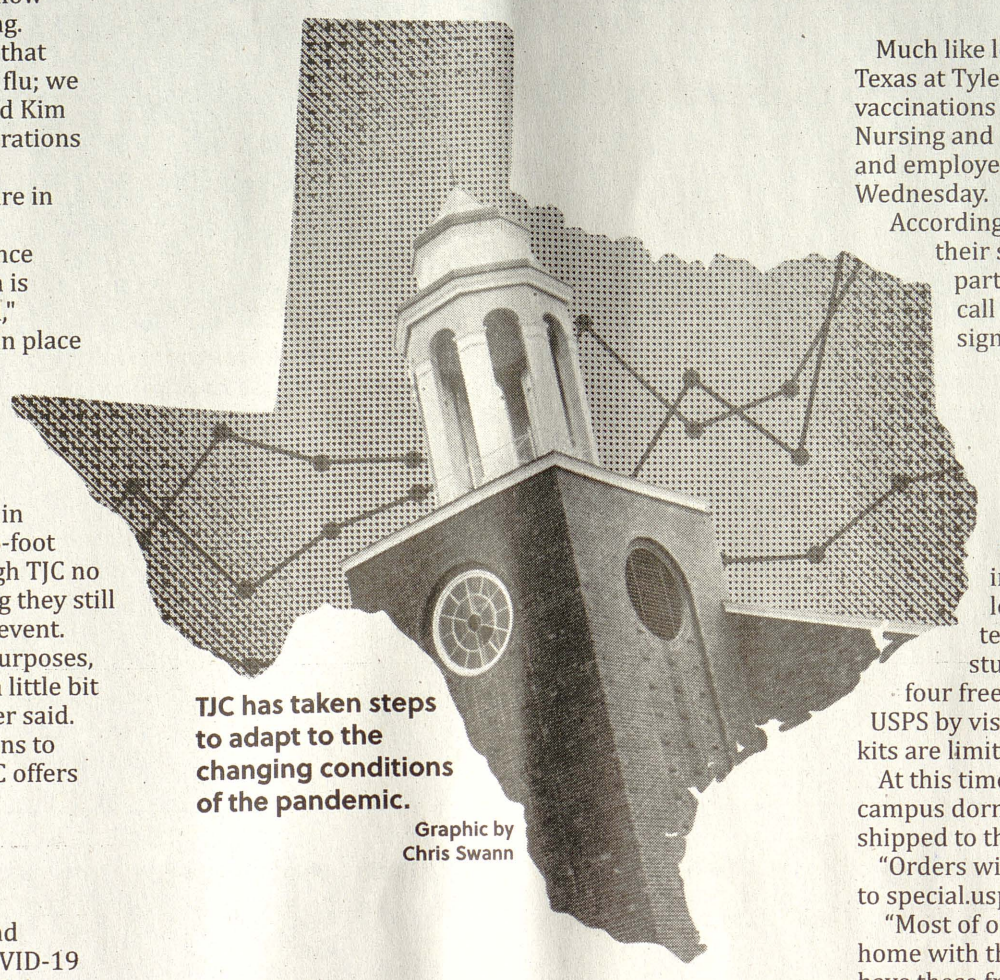
According to tjc.edu/coronavirus, students and employees who are ill or show symptoms of COVID-19 are required to stay home and quarantine for 10 days. Individuals who have been in contact (within 3 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 should also stay home and quarantine.

People may return to TJC after five days of quarantine when both of the following conditions are met:

- Provide a negative test on day five or later
- Sign a statement verifying that you are symptom-free

"You can use a form, or it simply can be an email from your TJC official email whether you're an employee or a student, and you're stating, 'I am symptom free,'" Lessner said.

In addition to TJC's COVID-19 policy, which can be located at tjc.edu/coronavirus, TJC has asked all supervisors to send home employees and students who come to the campus sick.



TJC has taken steps to adapt to the changing conditions of the pandemic.

Graphic by Chris Swann

"We have asked all supervisors, so employees that are supervisors, if there is an employee that comes to work sick, sounds sick, has a cough; send them home. It is a requirement," Lessner said. She also mentions professors reserve the same right to send students home who are showing symptoms of COVID-19.

Vaccination available at health clinic

Much like local colleges, including the University of Texas at Tyler and Kilgore College, TJC offers students vaccinations on campus. The UT Health Clinic in Rogers Nursing and Health Sciences Center is offering students and employees vaccinations from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. every Wednesday.

According to tjc.edu/coronavirus, "It will depend on their stock as to which vaccine is offered on a particular Wednesday. To receive a vaccine, please call the on-campus clinic at 903-510-3862 and sign up for a day and time."

Testing

TJC does not offer testing at any campus facility. However, students and employees who are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 in need of testing can find available testing locations by visiting nethealthcovid19.org/testing. In addition to local testing sites, students with a valid home address can receive four free individual rapid antigen COVID-19 tests from USPS by visiting special.usps.com/testkits. The testing kits are limited to one order per residential address.

At this time, students cannot send their tests to on-campus dorm rooms; however, residents can have the kits shipped to their home address instead.

"Orders will ship free starting in late January," according to special.usps.com/testkits.

"Most of our students have an apartment, or they live at home with their parents. You know, they're all eligible to have these free home tests," Lessner said.

For all students and employees who may have questions regarding TJC's COVID-19 policy, visit tjc.edu/coronavirus. For specific situations/questions, email Lessner at covid19questions@tjc.edu.

Filing taxes for the first time? Here's what you need to know

By Chris Swann
Design and Photo Editor

Millions of Americans are about to commence the yearly ritual of doing their taxes and reporting to the IRS how much they made in 2021 and figuring out if they are due for a refund. For many college students, this year is the first time they will be filing taxes, which can be an intimidating task. Here's what first-time filers need to know.

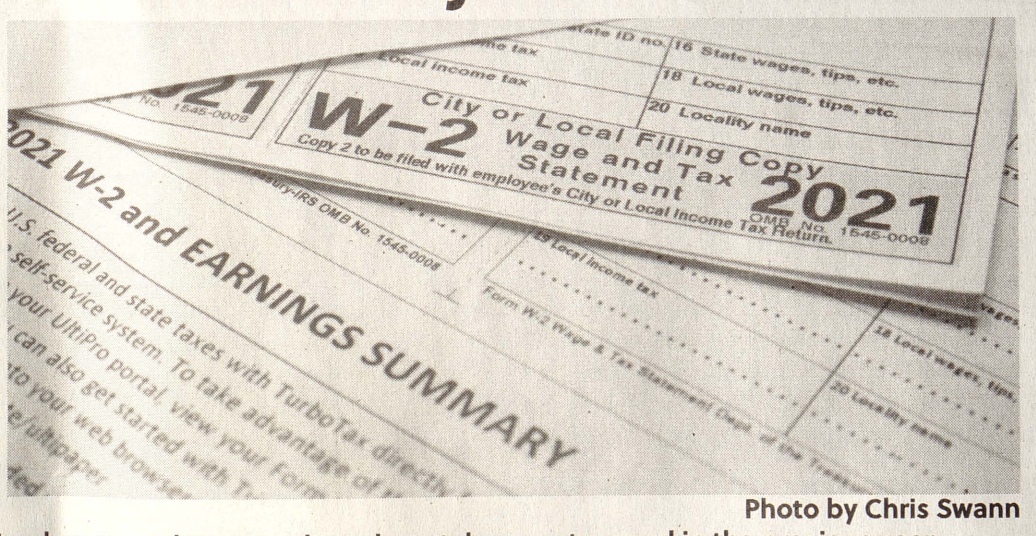


Photo by Chris Swann

Employers send W-2s to show the total amount earned in the previous year including taxes. This is the main form used when filing.

1. Do you need to file a return or not?

The Federal tax filing season began on Jan. 24 and runs until April 18. Whether one needs to file taxes or not is determined by how much they made during the previous year. According to H&R Block's website, "The minimum income for single people under 65 years old to file taxes is $12,550. If your income is below this amount, you do not need to file for a return."

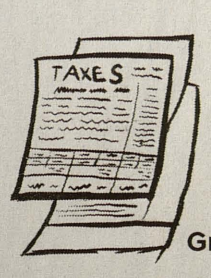
2. Check your dependency status

First-time filers need to know if their parents are claiming them on their tax returns, which is also known as being claimed to be a dependent or independent. "There are two ways to be a dependent of another taxpayer," said Hunter Throckmorton, CPA at Throckmorton CPA. "If you're a qualifying child of another taxpayer, or you are a qualifying relative of another taxpayer." Examples of a qualifying relative, according to the IRS include a child, stepchild, brother, sister or parent.

Your age, student status and who provides your monetary support are factors in determining your status.

"If you are not going to be on your parents' return, then you may want to look at the IRS website," TJC Accounting Professor Jennifer Coon said. You will still need to file if you are a dependent who makes the income requirements.

Every individual's situation is different, and there are many resources online to help determine your dependency status. You can look up the IRS's Dependency Test on irs.gov.



For more information or help filing your taxes, visit the IRS's website on irs.gov.

Graphic by Chris Swann

3. Research what forms you'll need

Form 1040 - You'll file your taxes with a Form 1040. This is where you'll report your tax information including income, tax deductions, and the amount you will be refunded or owe.

W-2 - This is the form employers send to show how much you've earned over the past year. It will also show the total amount of taxes the government has taken out for things like Social Security benefits, state and federal income taxes, and Medicare taxes.

1099s - According to NerdWallet, a 1099 is a record that an individual other than your employer gave or paid you money. There are many kinds of 1099 forms for different kinds of people. For example, a 1099-MISC is what freelancers often receive from their clients showing what the client has paid.

1098-Ts - This shows the amount paid for certain education expenses, like tuition and fees, in the year.

1098-Es - If you're paying off student loans, your loan servicers use this form to report the total amount of interest paid. You use this form to figure out your student loan interest deduction.

4. Search for programs offering free or affordable help

There are many programs that offer assistance for individuals filing. College students can typically file for free via the IRS Free File Program if they earn an adjusted gross income of $73,000 or less. They can also consult with a certified public accountant. These are trained individuals with accounting degrees who are able to help with the special circumstances that come with filing taxes. They can also use services like TurboTax, Tax Slayer and TaxAct. All these services offer free live assistance from certified CPAs and tax experts during tax season. "There's some different sites out there that can help guide you through the process. They'll ask you questions and you answer them and they help you fill out your tax return," Coon said.

5. How to maximize your refund

Filing as an independent allows you to receive tax credits or deductions for education-related expenses. According to Credit Karma, "Your parents can claim you as a dependent on their tax return if you're a single, full-time student younger than 24. But if you're paying your own way through college, be sure to talk to your parents about not claiming you so that you can take advantage of tax breaks on your own tax return."

You can also take advantage of the American Opportunity Tax Credit, which can give students up to $2,500 to reduce their tax liability. "A portion of this can also be refundable," Throckmorton said. For students attending college for more than four years, there is the Lifetime Learning Credit. This is also a tax credit on tuition like the AOTC.

Coon also states you can only claim what you have paid out of pocket. "So, if you got Pell grants that covered all of your tuition, you cannot claim that," Coon said. However, you can still claim student loans. "People think because they got a loan, they can't claim it, but you can claim it," Coon said.

While taxes can be an intimidating task, there are a multitude of resources that can assist with all aspects of them from organizing and preparing to filing. Throckmorton stresses the importance of having a certified individual walk you through the process.

"The U.S. federal tax code alone is several thousand pages long, so there are always special circumstances, or things that apply to one taxpayer and not another even though it seems like they should be identical," Throckmorton said. "It is very important for a student, or taxpayer of any kind to seek help from qualified individuals if they have questions about their particular situation."

VSCO trend highlights pollution issues

Story and photographs by Nicki Tijerina
Multimedia Journalist

In mid to late 2019, the Visual Supply Company, or VSCO, trend went wild. With it brought a serious issue into light: Save the turtles. The VSCO trend rejected single use plastics, saying they polluted the ocean and lead to the death of turtles, as turtles would mistake it for food that would cause them to choke and die.

"Many turtles, that have been killed by consuming debris, had plastic bags or fishing line in their stomachs, some as small as half of a fingernail," according to the Sea Turtle Conservancy website. "Sea turtles are especially susceptible to the effects of consuming marine debris due to their bodies' own structure."

A large push was made to convince individuals to ditch single-use plastics or recycle them. Several commercials were made listing the statistics and the consequences of single-use plastics in the ocean. "By 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean," according to the Global Plastic Action Partnership website.

Now we are not only looking at a push to end plastics, but to switch from standard internal combustion engines to electric cars to bring down carbon emissions. This push to limit pollution is fantastic. It benefits future generations and will prolong the lifespan of our planet.

University of Georgia environmental engineering professor, Jenna Jambeck, has calculated there is 9 million tons of plastic waste floating around the ocean. When it comes to greenhouse gasses and carbon emissions individuals only account for 8.1 metric tons out of 6,508 million metric tons, according to a study done by the Center of Sustainable Systems at the University of Michigan.

A possible solution to the plastic problem that everyone can do is simply recycling, but some plastics can't be recycled. For example, No. 3 plastics and vinyl, and No. 7 plastics, which are various kinds of plastics like acrylic, fiberglass, and nylon can't be recycled. "PVC recycle number means that the item is strong and elastic due to softening chemicals. Some other highly toxic chemicals like DEHA can be produced during the whole plastic No. 3 life cycle," according to an article written by YesStraws, a biodegradable straw manufacturer, "it is hard to recycle 7 plastics and most factories do not accept it. There are no standard protocols for using and reusing this plastic."

Large corporations have created a big misconception on who is responsible for the pollution of our planet because of the constant marketing for individuals to stop using single-use plastics and switch over to electric cars, when it's actually corporations polluting our water and air.

The Global Plastic Action Partnership aims to shape a more sustainable and inclusive world through the eradication of plastic pollution.

"The fossil fuel industry took a page from the tobacco industry's playbook in its efforts to defeat action on climate change," according to Richard Heede with the Climate Accountability Institute. "Similarity between the tobacco industry's disinformation campaign and the fossil fuel industry's current efforts to sow confusion about climate change."

The tactic of manipulation caused people to believe that massive fossil fuel emissions done by these corporations is not nearly that bad, which, of course, results in unchecked pollution by these corporations.

"Fossil fuel companies have stymied efforts to make this necessary energy transition by sowing public doubt about climate science and pushing a misleading narrative of consumer responsibility for the climate crisis," according to the Harvard Political Review.

The responsibility of fixing the current state of our planet doesn't fall on us as individuals but on corporations. They're able to twist the blame of pollution by convincing that the issue is non-existent or not as major as it actually is no fault of our own and these corporations need to make changes to themselves before any actual push to helping our planet can be made However, this article was not made to deter people from doing their part in helping our planet. There are things we can still do and every bit helps take us in the right direction, such as buying reusable straws, taking aluminum cans to the Tyler Iron and Metal Co. As they offer 65 cents per pound scrap metal you bring in. There are even ways to help on campus by pushing Keep TJC Beautiful to add recycling bins around campus and even participating in Arbor Day at TJC to help replant trees around campus.

DB Have an opinion?

Share it with us by writing a guest column or letter to the editor.

Here's what you need to know:

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- All contributions will be edited for grammar, spelling, length (500 word maximum), profanity, and personal attacks.
- All letters must include the author's name, email and phone number.
- Editors reserve the right to deny publication of any letter.

Email letters to news@thedrumbeat.com, or drop off letters to Jenkins 1114 B.

When We Were Young festival promises a safe environment despite internet concern

By Brooklyn Gundling
Copy Editor

Bodies pressing together, time tested vocals barely being heard over the sound of thousands screaming, bass thumping in your bones until it seems to become a part of you — festivals give us a connection to our favorite bands, yes, but also to our fellow fans.

When We Were Young festival promises 64 bands, including headliners Paramore and My Chemical Romance, to play on a Las Vegas stage in October.

However, not everyone is excited for When We Were Young. In fact, many online are already calling it "Fyre Fest 2.0." This is referencing the 2017 festival with the same name. Fyre Fest promised luxury accommodations and glamorous parties only to have attendees wildly let down by their sleeping arrangements: mattresses on the soaked floor. The festival was so disappointing that it inspired the Netflix documentary, "Fyre: The Greatest Party That Never Happened."

Fans and frequent concert-goers are concerned about the size of the Las Vegas venue, especially after the tragedy of AstroWorld, which was also organized by Live Nation this past November. More than that, however, the increase in COVID-19 cases is cause for concern, especially with non-refundable tickets.

One critic, Meredith Hinkel, said in January, "I've been to my fair share of festivals, and it just seems like so much can go wrong with this," Hinkle said. "I just can't justify spending close to $300 on something that seems like it's going to be Fyre Fest 2.0."

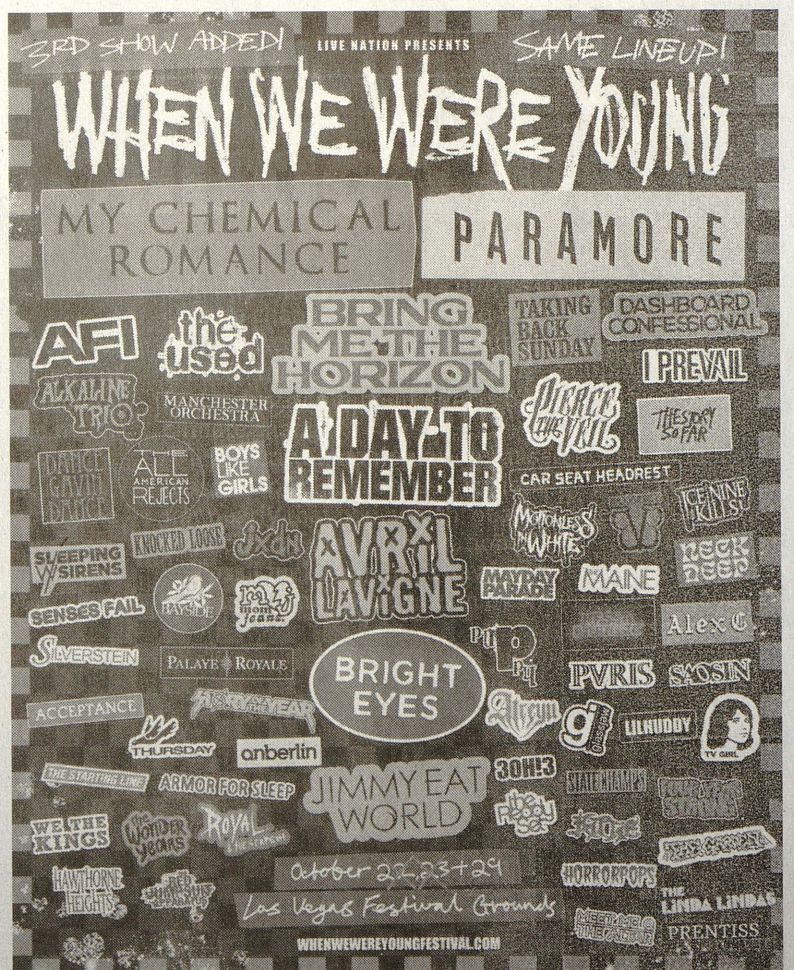
This has been the conversation since When We Were Young was announced, but it seems as though Live Nation was listening.

Due to the rapid sell-out of the festival coupled with online complaints, Live Nation added a third day to the originally one-day festival. Now, each band will have more time to perform and concert-goers will have more time to travel between stages or off festival grounds without fear of being trampled.

A Live Nation spokesperson told Newsweek in an interview in January, "the safety of fans, artists and staff is thoroughly planned for." Their COVID-19 procedures, while not extensive, can be found on the festival's website. As for the non-refundable tickets, well that can be chalked up to industry standard. It is not uncommon to have a large festival non-refundable, especially one with such big names.

"We have seen a lot of excitement around this festival and we look forward to putting on an incredible event for all of the fans this October. We encourage fans to check the festival website and socials for all of the latest updates," a Live Nation spokesperson told Newsweek.

A festival that seemed doomed from the start just may have redeemed itself in the eyes of the public. When We Were Young is slated to take place in October later this year, and while I was among the most outspoken critics at the beginning, I truly wish I could go and experience everything the festival has to offer.



When We Were Young festival promises 64 bands, including headliners Paramore and My Chemical Romance, to play on a Las Vegas stage in October.

Photo Courtesy of Live Nation

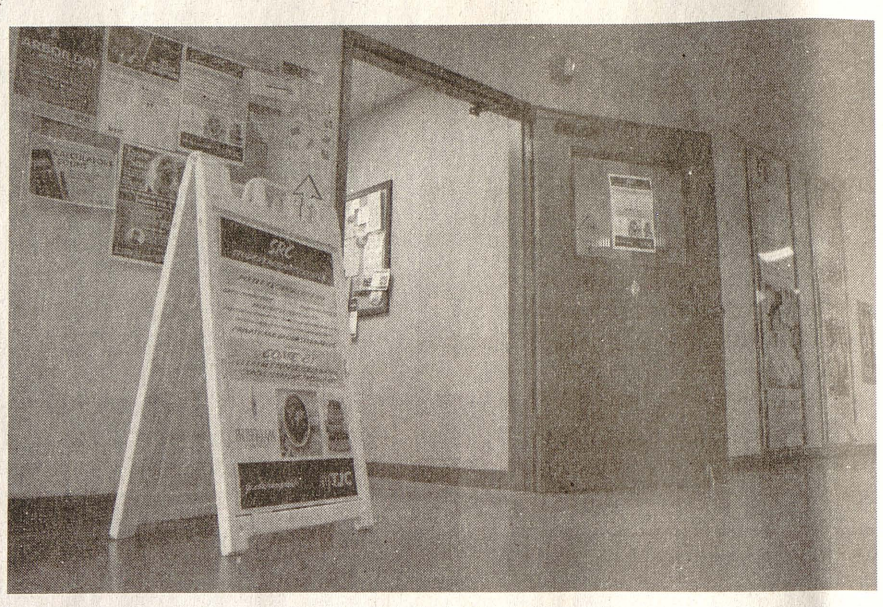
Phi Theta Kappa creates Student Resource Center

By Asia Johnson
Managing Editor
Photos by Chris Swann

Phi Theta Kappa students performed research on what could benefit the student body. Their research showed that 80% of students in the area qualified for free or reduced lunch.

Because of their findings, students created the Student Resource Center, located in the Pirtle Technology Center, Room 214.

"Many students don't have money for needed school supplies or maybe just forgot their notebook or phone charger," said Gigi Delk, PTK adviser. "If we have those resources available, students are more likely to be prepared and successful in class."



At the Student Resource Center students can request a ride to seek food, clothing, utility, medical and dental assistance.

The Resource Center provides study areas with nine computers, free printing and internet access. It also comes with other materials that are beneficial to students.

"We have a clothes closet where we try to stock interview type clothing, as well as warm clothing and new socks," Delk said. "There are plenty of free school supplies to help students be prepared in the classroom, including pens, pencils, highlighters, scantrons, note cards, notebooks and folders."

Delk adds they provide personal hygienic items and free foods that help keep students focused in their classes like breakfast bars, fruit cups and more.

The Resource Center and its assets have attracted many students.

"We had over 800 students sign in at the Resource Center last fall," Delk said.

Students have found the Resource Center to be helpful.

Freshman Kinsey Ponder, "The Student Resource Center has helped me by offering snacks that I can get whenever I don't have time for breakfast. It's really an awesome place for students."

PTK has received support from the School of Professional and Technical Programs and Dean Loretta Swann for this center, as well as funding provided by SSFAC in past semesters.

SSFAC is funding for campus organizations that comes from the student service fee that's included in each student's detailed tuition list. A committee decides how that money will be distributed among the organizations.

A fund was made for faculty to contribute to help students and the Student Resource Center still benefits from those donations.

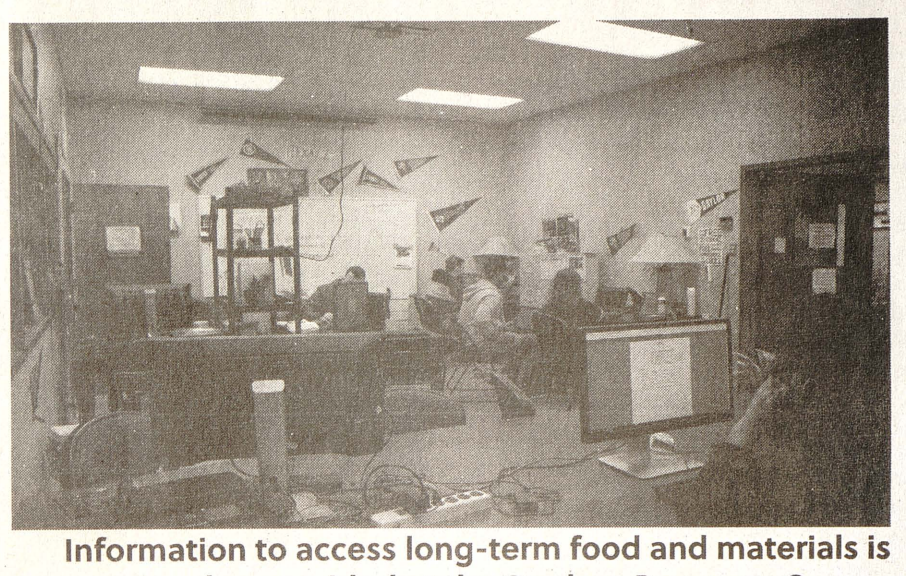
Many students who have received help at the SRC return with donations and encourage their churches to provide donations as well. This past year, PTK was able to successfully apply for a grant to help sustain the center.

Any information regarding bus lines, the campus health clinic, campus security and other outside community resources can also be found in the SRC.

The SRC is open from 8:30 a.m.- 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Fridays.

The SRC is run by volunteer staff members and work study students and is in constant search of more staff. You can stop by the SRC's room for more information.

"We are always looking for students interested in volunteering or working with us," Delk said.



Information to access long-term food and materials is also provided at the Student Resource Center.

Tips for staying safe during hazardous winter conditions

By Dillon Richardson
Multimedia Journalist

According to The National Weather Service, over 5,000 individuals are killed and 418,000 are injured due to storm-related auto accidents. One thing to be aware of is black ice, which are clear patches of freezing rain that are difficult to see on road tops. If you can't avoid traveling, then be sure to drive extra slowly. Always be sure to let others know where you are as often as you can throughout your trip and try to have another person with you at all times. It's highly advisable to carry a winter storm kit with items such as additional phone accessories like backup chargers and batteries, along with toiletry items, snacks, flashlights with batteries, a first aid kit, sand or cat litter for perilous roads, waterproof matches to melt snow for drinking water and a compass with paper maps in case technology fails. You can find a full list of items to get for your home, work office, and vehicle on the NWS winter page.

If you find yourself stranded in the middle of a winter storm without shelter, it is critical to either seek the nearest shelter available to you or to use the resources you have at your disposal to create shelter. Remember snow can be a source of hydration, if necessary. You can generate body heat in order to avoid the risk of hypothermia, which is a severe drop in body temperature, but be sure to not overexert yourself as too much exercise may actually harm you more. Common symptoms of hypothermia are confusion, shivering, difficulty speaking, sleepiness, and stiff muscles. Keeping yourself warm can greatly reduce the risk of hypothermia.

In the event you are stranded in your vehicle, remember to go as slow as possible. If your car skids, keep calm and take your foot off the accelerator and turn your steering wheel in the safest direction that the front of your vehicle can take you. If you have Anti-Lock Brakes, only apply steady pressure on the brake pedal. ABS is designed to automatically pump your brakes for you in situations such as these, so there is no reason for you to manually pump them. If you cannot see where you are going, promptly pull over to keep from getting disoriented and wait for conditions to improve. Be sure to turn off all of your lights and initiate your parking brake, as counter intuitive as it may seem. This will help prevent other disoriented drivers with minimal visibility from trying to follow your taillights and accidentally crashing into you.

Additional Key Terms:

Winter Storm Warning - There is a strong chance that a winter storm will be, or is already in progress. Winter storms can produce heavy snow, sleet, and freezing rain.

Winter Storm Watch - Based on current forecast models, there is a moderate chance that atmospheric conditions are capable of producing winter storms.

Winter Storm Advisory - Less-than-stormy conditions are expected, although road conditions can still be perilous for travelers. Keep a lookout for slick patches of ice and anticipate small amounts of snow or sleet.

Black Ice - Patches of ice that accumulates on roadways or walkways that might not be immediately noticeable to an individual traveling on these surfaces. Exercise caution.

For more information, visit: weather.gov/safety/winter.

Graphic by Chris Swann

Some other things to consider if you're driving:

- Exiting your vehicle will only lead you to become more disoriented than you already might be. Try to avoid it. The exception to this is to incrementally check your exhaust pipe to make sure snow doesn't build up, which could lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Create adequate ventilation inside your vehicle by cracking windows when running the heater.
- The National Weather Service advises anyone stuck in their vehicle to run their engine at least 10 minutes every hour.
- Remain visible to potential rescuers by keeping a light on at night when running your engine. You can also tie a bright-colored cloth to your car's antenna or door in order to make others aware of your presence.

Driving in storms can be challenging to new drivers, or those who don't often encounter those conditions. Make sure to be prepared by keeping an emergency kit in your car with items like a first aid kit, extra batteries for electronics or radios, non-perishable food items like crackers and water, and a copy of your car's manual for information on its safety features. If not absolutely necessary, don't drive in conditions you aren't comfortable in.

If you find yourself stranded indoors:

- Avoid wasting heat by closing off any doors leading to rooms that aren't in use.
- Trap heat by adding barriers like towels or handcloths under doors.
- Keep curtains and blinds closed to stave off cold from the outside and retain heat.
- Keep yourself hydrated and hunger-satiated with non-caffeinated beverages and snacks that are high in calories in order to stay energized, which will keep your core temperature steady; light exercise also aids in this, just be careful not to overexert yourself. Sweating can lead to chills.

Information gathered from weather.gov/safety/winter.

Giving Valentine's Day gifts on a student budget

By Sophia Colston
Multimedia Journalist

As Valentine's Day approaches, we want to give our loved ones something special, but finding a good gift within the budget of a college student can be a hassle. The most important thing to remember is, it's the thought that counts. Whether you are grabbing a gift the morning of or are prepared weeks in advance, there are stores near the campus full of items for every type of relationship.

If your partner is a cuddly person, a good gift can be something like a sweater or a blanket. You can also choose a themed stuffed animal at Target or Walmart. The seasonal section in the front of the store is full of dogs with heart-shaped eyes and bears that say "I love you." You can tie a flower to their paw or have them holding a box of chocolates. You can also suggest a fun movie night for Valentine's Day.

Chill and laid back people can be a bit harder to shop for. A thoughtful basket of their favorite snacks from The Dollar Store can be a great way to say you love and appreciate them. Offer to cook together on Valentine's Day for a fun and unique date night.

We all know someone who doesn't want any gifts. It can be very frustrating to shop for them. However, some flowers and a nice card from Walmart can show you are thinking about them, even if you don't know what to get. In case things get difficult, a good alternative could be taking them to their favorite restaurant or making some Valentine's Day cookies together.

It can seem hard to save money on Valentine's Day, but a bit of creativity goes a long way. Stores have gifts starting as low as $1, so you shouldn't worry. Find something fun to do like a game or just sitting down and watching a movie together. Whomever you are celebrating with will appreciate the effort more than anything.

There are a variety of valentine gifts available at a low price point for college students on a tight budget.

Photo by Alexa Glenn

After releasing their first comic book in 1939 Marvel has become one of the biggest names in the entertainment industry. Throughout the past 83 years Marvel has introduced over 8,000 characters.

Photo by Alexa Glenn

Marvel introduces all new line up

By Nicki Tijerina
Multimedia Journalist

With Tony Stark dead, Thor off wandering the galaxy and Captain America gone, the Marvel Cinematic Universe is stepping outside their box to bring what were once side and unknown characters onto center stage. They are also expanding their universe by pulling heroes and villains from the multiverse. With "Spiderman No Way Home" opening the dimension doorway into a completely new multiverse saga, Marvel is introducing an exciting lineup of new heroes to fight a more diabolical set of villains. "Doctor Strange and the Multiverse of Madness," coming out on May 6, is going to be the next step in this new phase. It will be carrying over the events of "WandaVision" as well as introducing an all new hero, American Chavez, with the powers of super strength, flight and punching star shaped interdimensional portals.

Their most recent project is "Moon Knight," which is set to air on March 30 and follows Steven Grant, a man with dissociative identity disorder who struggles to balance his other three personalities: Marc Spector, Jake Lockley and Moon Knight. Marc Spector is a violent killer for hire, while Jake Lockley is an average civilian. Moon Knight, however, is a servant of the Egyptian moon God, Khonshu, whose mission is to bring justice to the world. The show will follow Steven Grant's journey of understanding his other personalities and the mysterious powers of the Egyptian God.

Next on the roster is "Thor: Love and Thunder," set to premiere July 8. With Chris Hemsworth's contract ending, it's time to pass the hammer on to someone else who is worthy to wield the power of the mighty Thor passed on by Mjolnir. It's set to be Natalie Portman's character Jane Foster. Not much is known about the plot of this movie, but Chris Hemsworth told The Philadelphia Inquirer that it is "one of the best scripts he's read in years." The movie is going to be directed by Taika Waititi and members of the "Guardians of the Galaxy" such as Chris Pratt, Dave Bautista and others have been seen on the set.

Sometime this summer, "Ms. Marvel " will air on the streaming platform Disney+. "Ms. Marvel" follows the story of Kamala Khan, an inhuman. Inhumans are a human with an alien gene that once in contact with terrigen mist their genetic code is altered giving them superhuman abilities. Khan's power is to grow her body and limbs to gigantic proportions. It is not known yet how this series will tie into everything going on in the MCU; however, Khan is expected to appear in the promised movie "The Marvels."

One of the most anticipated movies in this phase, "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever," is premiering Nov. 11. There have been a lot of rumors and speculation of who will take up the mantle of Chadwick Boseman's role of Black Panther, but Marvel has yet to confirm anything. Many fans believe multiple people will take on the role in the coming releases. The movie is also rumored to have Marvel's king of Atlantis, Namor, appear.

With many more exciting projects in the works for this upcoming phase of incredibly intricate intertwined stories all leading up to something mind blowing. The ongoing in-depth storytelling will continue keeping Marvel one of the longest running franchises out there.

Summarizing my top 10 movies of 2021

Paris McGinnins Jr.
Multimedia Journalist

I would recommend all of the movies on this list so if you have not seen them, give these movies a chance if you are interested. Last year was a great year for movies due to the pandemic delaying movies from 2020. These movies are deserving of recognition.

10: "**Old,**" Directed By M. Night Shyamalan: A director with a hit or miss track record, hit a home run with this outing; however, the twist in this movie is surprisingly good.

9: **"Escape Room 2,"** Directed By Adam Robitel: This sequel is more tense than the first with unique puzzles and a storyline that greatly complements the overall mystery.

8: **"The Guilty,"** (Netflix) Directed By Antoine Fuqua: An acclaimed director with an acclaimed actor of Jake Gyllenhaal status makes this selection a great movie night thriller.

Images courtesy of IMDb

7: **"The Harder They Fall,"** (Netflix), Directed By Jeymes Samuel: This Netflix adaptation is a modern day western with a twist of a hip-hop soundtrack and an all-star cast that performs better than what is shown on paper: Say no more you have won my attention.

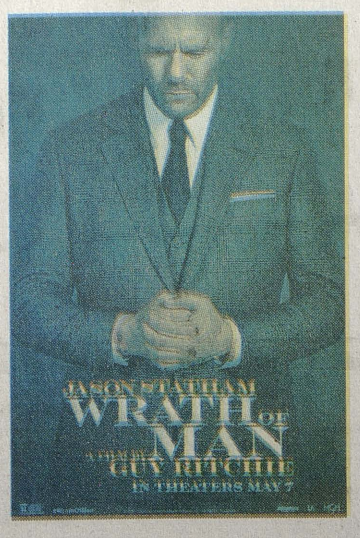
6: **"Don't Breathe 2,"** Directed By Rodo Sayagues: This film displays excellent cinematography for a horror movie with a game changing mid-film plot twist that turns a villain from the first movie into a hero.

5: **"No Time To Die,"** Directed By Cary Joji Fukunaga: Daniel Craig's last James Bond film was the superb tearjerker and fitting final chapter that James Bond needed...for now.

4: **"Kate,"** (Netflix) Directed By Cedric Nicolas-Troyan: Netflix's best movie of 2021 had some of the best action set pieces in cinema. This is how you create a compelling female hero without forcing it.

3: **"Spider-Man: No Way Home,"** Directed By Jon Watts: The theme of home throughout the three most recent Spider-Man movies hits home. This film is possibly one of Tom Holland's best performances as this experience is a dessert for all Spider-Man fans.

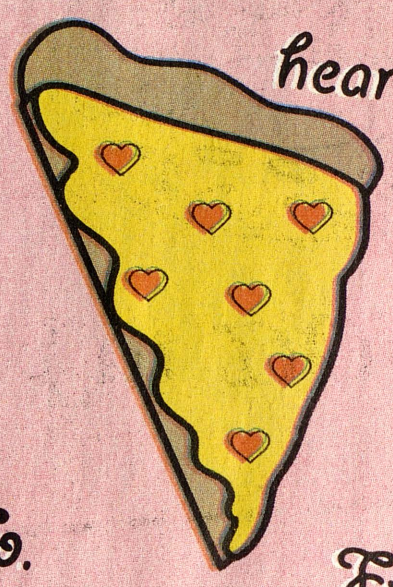
2: **"Spiral: From The Book Of Saw,"** Directed By Darren Lynn Bousman: This is the best "Saw" movie of all time, and Chris Rock proves he is more than capable of starring in a drama.



1: **"Wrath Of Man,"** Directed By Guy Ritchie: The best movie of 2021 in my not so humble opinion stars Jason Statham deep in his bag of greatness alongside a great story structure for a thrilling movie experience.

Valentine's Day Cards

You've stolen a pizza my heart!



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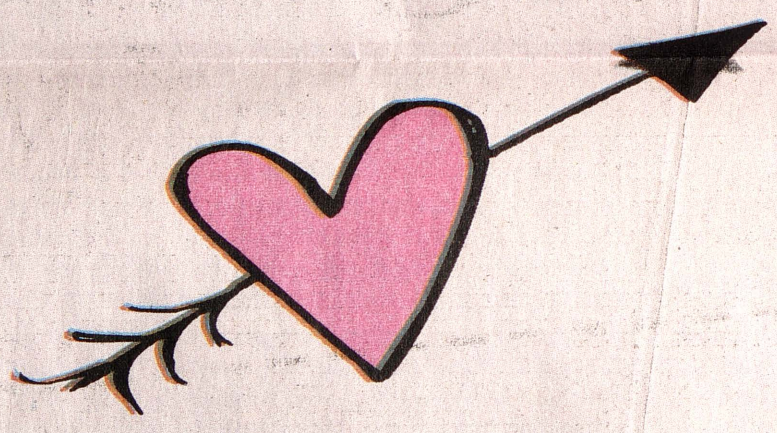

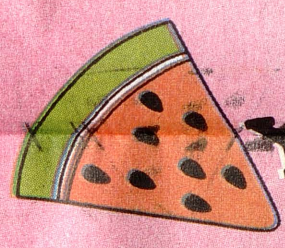

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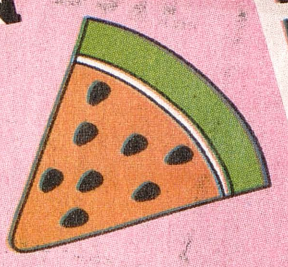

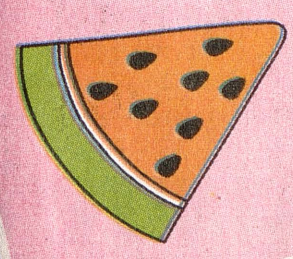

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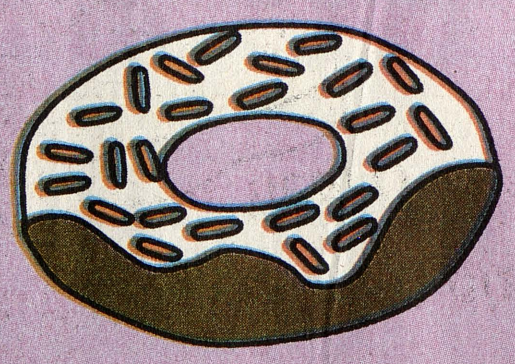
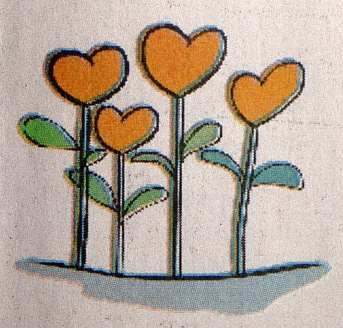


For you!

To: From:

Cut out these cards above and show your love to friends, family, etc!



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